NCITS Approves New CD-Based Geographic Information Standard
Considered Integral to Homeland Security,
Standard Will Be Used By Military Facilities And Commercial Airports

Washington, DC, November 15, 2001 - Today at a meeting of the National Committee for Information Technology Standards (NCITS), the Executive Committee approved the Spatial Data Standard for Facilities, Infrastructure & Environment (NCITS 353). The standard represents an important milestone, not only because of what it addresses, but also because of its database format, which makes it instantly usable.

NCITS 353 is a nonproprietary geographic information (GI) standard for use with off-the-shelf Geographic Information System (GIS), Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CADD), and relational database software. The standard coupled with this software supports comprehensive master planning, environmental planning, and site planning, engineering, and lifecycle maintenance for facilities/installations, infrastructure, and environmental applications. (Note: geographic information may also be referred to as spatial data.)

"Now there will be a national standard for enabling the common collection and interoperability of spatial data by DoD facilities, state and local governments," said Henry Tom, Chairman of NCITS L1, GIS Technical Committee. "Because these operations include our military facilities, civilian airports and other public facilities, infrastructure, and environment, this standard is fundamental for our homeland defense."

Kate McMillan, Director of the NCITS Secretariat, explained the significance of putting the standard on CD as a digital database: Given the sheer size of NCITS 353, providing this standard in digital form via a CD greatly enhances the viewing and browsing of it and reduces the burden on an organization's efforts to implement this standard into a commercial GI database schema."

The CADD/GIS Center originally developed the GI standard for Facilities, Infrastructure, and Environment (Center) for the installation communities within the Federal Government, including all branches of the military, NASA, the Federal Aviation Administration, the State Department, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Various city governments and other public agencies within state and local governments have also participated in the development of the standard and are implementing it. Designed to be easy to implement, this GI standard will aid any Federal, State, and Local Government organizations; public utilities; and private industry that plan, manage, or maintain significant infrastructure/facilities.

The Center annually updates and expands the GI standard and will update the NCITS version accordingly.

Content of the Standard
NCITS 353 defines a catalog of geographic features as well as the graphical representation of those features in a well-defined data model. (A geographic feature is a

representation of a real world phenomenon associated with a location relative to the earth.) These features are graphically represented, based on map components, as a point, a line, or a polygon. Additionally, the standard contains non-graphic attributes associated with each feature type that further describe/define each feature, business/facility management, and/or "event" type information (e.g., construction, operation, maintenance, repair, and inspection type records).

Format of the Standard
Users quickly install a browser application via the CD to view/browse and print the NCITS 353 feature type catalog. Additionally, the NCITS 353 "generator" may be installed that provides the capability to generate ANSI-compliant SQL code of an "implementable" schema in support of database schema construction.

About NCITS
The National Committee for Information Technology Standards (NCITS) is the forum of choice for information technology developers, producers and users for the creation and maintenance of formal de jure IT standards. NCITS is accredited by, and operates under rules approved by, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These rules are designed to ensure that voluntary standards are developed by the consensus of directly and materially affected interests. The NCITS web site is www.ncits.org <http://www.ncits.org> and the address is NCITS Secretariat, Information Technology Industry Council, 1250 Eye St. NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005.